Accountability Report

2015–2016

Seniors

NOVA SCOTIA

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Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Nova Scotia Department of Seniors for the year ended March 31, 2016 is prepared pursuant to the Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department of Seniors Statement of Mandate for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of the Department of Seniors' outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Department of Seniors' management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of Department of Seniors' management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Department of Seniors 2015-2016 Statement of Mandate.

Nova Scotia Department of Seniors

Original signed by

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Minister – Honourable Leo A. Glavine

Original signed by

_____

Deputy Minister – Simon d'Entremont

Message from the Minister/Deputy Minister

We are pleased to present the 2015-2016 Accountability Report for the Department of Seniors.

In the last year, the Department of Seniors' mandate was strengthened to provide more focus and bring a strategic approach to addressing government's priorities, by recognizing and enabling the social and economic contributions of older Nova Scotians to our province.

In March, the department sponsored a Silver Economy Summit in New Glasgow. The event brought together older Nova Scotians, representatives from municipalities and community organizations, business people and international experts to discuss a wide range of issues related to the participation of older adults in the economy, as workers, as entrepreneurs, and as consumers.

Working with Nova Scotians to create inclusive, safe and age-friendly communities across the province continued to be a priority of the department. Communities and community organizations across Nova Scotia received funding for seniors safety programs and the creation and implementation of age-friendly community plans.

Another priority of the department is to ensure that older adults and their families can easily access the information they need. In addition to publishing its popular Positive Aging Directory, the department provided the Seniors Information Line and Seniors Abuse Referral Service through 211. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by phone, and on-line at 211.ca.

Broad, collaborative and creative approaches are required to embrace the opportunities associated with an aging population in Nova Scotia. Going forward, the Department will continue to work with our partners across government, municipalities, businesses, community stakeholders and with older adults themselves. This will ensure Nova Scotians can remain engaged, active and healthy members in their communities across the province as they age.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Leo A. Glavine
Minister of Seniors

Original signed by

Simon d'Entremont
Deputy Minister, Department of Seniors

Financial Results

Department of Seniors Financial Results 2015-2016		
	2015-2016 Estimate	*2015-2016 Actual*
	$Thousands	*$Thousands*
Executive Administration	665.0	660.3
Seniors' Initiatives	831.0	832.8
Total Expenses	1496.0	1493.1
Funded Staff (FTEs)	7.0	6.9

Strategic Priorities and Goals

Fiscal year 2015-2016 brought an enhancement to the mandate of the Department of Seniors, and an evolution of the department to a policy coordination function, including a more focused and strategic approach to addressing government's priorities.

The Minister's mandate, and therefore that of the department, is to develop policy options for the social and economic contributions of seniors to Nova Scotia.

Highlights for the year included the development of a policy paper and framework for all of government respecting our aging population. The year was also marked by a renewed emphasis on collaboration, knowledge sharing and conversations with our partners across government, community, business, academia and older adults themselves.

Working with the Canadian Institutes for Health Research and the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation, the Department brought internationally renowned researchers with government decision and policy makers in a Best Brains Exchange that explored ways to enhance and support the continued participation of older adults in their communities.

In recognition of the important role that older adults play in our economy, as workers, as entrepreneurs, and as a market, the Department sponsored a Silver Economy Summit. Held in New Glasgow in March 2016, the event brought together 150 Nova Scotians and international experts to explore and discuss the economic opportunities in our older adult population.

Together with the Department of Justice the Department of Seniors contributed $280,000 to fund 14 senior safety programs across Nova Scotia. Thirty communities and organizations received a total of $262,000 from the Department to support the creation and implementation of age-friendly community plans.

Measuring Our Performance

Outcome measures

The following outcomes were identified as integral to advancing the work of the Department of Seniors in 2015-2016:

A. Stakeholder engagement (with seniors, senior-serving organizations, non-governmental organizations, all levels of government, academia, private sector, etc.)
   A.1. Seniors, seniors' organizations and senior-serving agencies have opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues.
   A.2. Increased collaboration with government departments and non-government organizations in the exploration and development of policy, programs and services that address the needs of seniors
   A.3. Increased profile among provincial government peers about the Department's role and function, and how we can benefit their planning efforts that relate to older Nova Scotians
   A.4. Increased public awareness and knowledge of the policies, programs and services available to seniors in Nova Scotia

B. Age-Friendly Communities (AFC)
   B.1. Increased AFC planning, implementation, and evaluation activities

A. Stakeholder engagement (with seniors, senior-serving organizations, non-governmental organizations, all levels of government, academia, private sector, etc.)

The 2015-2016 fiscal year saw a renewed emphasis by the Department with regard to conversations, knowledge sharing and collaborations with our partners across government, community, business, academia and older adults themselves.

A.1. Seniors, seniors' organizations and senior-serving agencies have opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues.

In addition to regular meetings with the Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia (Group of IX), the Department's leadership met with seniors groups in communities across the province in 2015. A consistent message emerged: Seniors want to be included in the life of this province. They want to be recognized for the contribution they make and they want to continue being actively involved.

Older adults were active contributors to the dialogue at the Silver Economy Summit in March 2016. Discussions were held on a wide range of issues related to the participation of older adults in the economy, as workers, as entrepreneurs, and as consumers.

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2015-2016	Results 2015-2016
A.1. Seniors, seniors' organizations and senior-serving agencies have opportunities to provide advice on public policy issues.	Satisfaction level of seniors' organizations with information provided and the mechanisms in place for bringing issues of concern to the attention of the Nova Scotia government.	Group of IX (Seniors Advisory Council to government) satisfaction (low, med, high) survey with the opportunity to provide advice on public policy issues.	**Target for 2014-2015: 70% high satisfaction** Insufficient responses were received to provide a valid measure for 2014-2015.* The survey was not administered in 2015-2016.	The department's work on the development of a policy framework that recognizes and enables the participation and contribution of older adults to Nova Scotia is a direct result of conversations held with seniors groups in communities across Nova Scotia in 2015-2016. The approach outlined in the policy framework for an aging population was endorsed by the Group of IX in February 2016.

The 2015-2016 statement of mandate incorrectly states that the 2014-2015 target was met.

A.2. Increased collaboration with government departments and non-government organizations in the exploration and development of policy, programs and services that address the needs of seniors.

A.3. Increased profile among provincial government peers about the Department's role and function, and how we can benefit their planning efforts that relate to older Nova Scotians.

Throughout 2015-2016, the Department held several meetings with our colleagues from a broad range of provincial government departments to share our policy research and findings, and consult with them regarding the development of a policy framework for all of government respecting our aging population. In addition to these meetings, the Department partnered with the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) and the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation to sponsor a Best Brains Exchange (BBE). The BBE brought together internationally renowned Canadian researchers with government policy and decision makers to explore leading research and evidence regarding the opportunities in and realities of our older population.

In 2016-2017 the Department of Seniors will build on this work and engage with government colleagues as well as representatives from community, business and academia to develop an action plan respecting our aging population.

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2015-2016	Results 2015-2016
A.2. Increased collaboration with government departments and non-government organizations in the exploration and development of policy, programs and services that address the needs of seniors. A.3.Increased profile among provincial government peers.	Number and type of initiatives on which the Department's staff provides consultation and policy advice.*		*The department's target in the 2015-2016 business plan was to engage in >40 initiatives. The evolution of the department to more of a strategic policy role resulted in a more focused approach to collaboration and engagement with both government and stakeholder groups including NGOs.	Silver Economy Summit (150 participants from government, including municipalities, business, community, international experts, and older adults themselves) Best Brains Exchange (25 government staff; 5 CIHR sponsored researchers) Five interdepartmental meetings involving up to 15 government departments and many one-on-one meetings with government colleagues. Department staff contributed to other government initiatives, for example, the Dementia Strategy.

A.4 Increased public awareness and knowledge of the policies, programs and services available to seniors in Nova Scotia

The 2015-2016 fiscal year marked the completion of the first year of the 211 service (211 by telephone, and 211.ca) providing the Seniors' Information Line and the Seniors Abuse Information and Referral Service. The 211 service enables increased and enhanced access for seniors to obtain the information they need, 24 hours a day, seven days a week in multiple languages, including French. The 211 database includes nearly 100 organizations that offer more than 200 programs and services that are targeted to or may be of interest to seniors in the province. 211 defines a senior as someone aged 55 or older. In 2015, services for seniors accounted for approximately 40 per cent of all referrals and 38 per cent of calls (Source: 211's 2015 report for the NS Department of Seniors).

The Department continued to publish and broadly distribute its popular Positive Aging directory.

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2015-2016	Results 2015-2016
A.4. Increased public awareness and knowledge of the policies, programs and services available to seniors in Nova Scotia		Number of calls received on the Seniors' Information Line Moved to 211 service in 2015		There were 8100 calls from people aged 55 or more in 2015. Services for seniors (including those received from younger callers) accounted for approximately 40 per cent of all referrals and 38 per cent of calls. Source: 211's 2015 report for NS Department of Seniors

B. Age-Friendly Communities (AFC)

B.1Increased AFC planning, implementation, and evaluation activities

Broad, collaborative and creative approaches are required to address the challenges and embrace the opportunities associated with an aging population. A significant thrust of the Department's work is focused on the development of inclusive, safe and age-friendly communities across Nova Scotia.

The Department of Seniors' Age Friendly Communities Program increases municipalities and communities' capacity to conduct Age Friendly planning, implementation and evaluation. *Age Friendly Communities* benefit older adults, as well as Nova Scotians of all ages, through improved health, increased independence, greater social and physical interactions and overall well-being. In 2015, the Department consolidated its Positive Aging program funding with the Age-friendly Communities program. As a result, thirty communities and organizations received a total of $262,000 from the Department to support the creation and implementation of age-friendly community plans and activities.

Together with the Department of Justice the Department of Seniors contributed $280,000 to fund 14 senior safety programs across Nova Scotia. These programs address safety concerns of seniors by promoting education and awareness of senior abuse, crime prevention and safety and health issues. Grant money is made available to eligible programs annually to a maximum of $20,000

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2015-16	Results
B.1. Increased AFC planning, implementation, and evaluation activities	Number of local governments engaged in becoming age-friendly communities Number of senior safety programs	Base Year 2010-2011: 6 local governments	Result 2013-2014: 13 local governments Target 2014-2015: 13 local governments Target 2015-2016: increase of 2-4 local governments	2015-2016 30 communities & organizations received age-friendly communities/ positive aging funding. 14 senior safety programs across Nova Scotia received funding

Appendix A

Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act

Annual Report under Section 18 of the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*

The Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011.

The Act provides for government employees to be able to come forward if they reasonably believe that a wrongdoing has been committed or is about to be committed and they are acting in good faith.

The Act also protects employees who do disclose from reprisals, by enabling them to lay a complaint of reprisal with the Labor Board.

A Wrongdoing for the purposes of the Act is:

a) a contravention of provincial or federal laws or regulations

b) a misuse or gross mismanagement of public funds or assets

c) an act or omission that creates an imminent risk of a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons or the environment, or

d) directing or counselling someone to commit a wrongdoing

Please use the following format to satisfy the disclosure obligation:

The following is a summary of disclosures received by the Department of Seniors.

Information Required under Section18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2015-2016
The number of disclosures received	No disclosures were received by the department in 2015-2016.
The number of findings of wrongdoing	n/a
Details of each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	n/a
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	n/a